Mayors' Challenge for Safer People, Safer Streets – Tucson
Self-Assessment Summary

This document summarizes the findings of a City of Tucson self-evaluation of local practices in bicycle and pedestrian safety based on the Mayors' Challenge for Safer People, Safer Streets worksheets developed by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Part A: Why participate in the challenge

Tucson Mayor Jonathan Rothschild has been a vocal advocate for bicycle and pedestrian improvements. He signed on to the Mayors' Challenge to improve safety, convenience and comfort for pedestrians and bicyclists. Tucson's weather and terrain make it well-suited to biking and walking, and it has historically been one of the top cities in the nation for bicycling. However, there is still work to be done to improve conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities.

While 2014 had fewer fatal crashes than average, this year has seen an uptick in traffic fatalities in Tucson, with 30 deaths so far (including 7 pedestrians and one bicyclist) compared to 16 for the same period last year. Due to its high rate of pedestrian injuries and fatalities, Tucson has been designated a Federal Highway Administration Pedestrian Safety Focus City.

While many choose to walk or bike in Tucson, others do so out of necessity. Improved engineering, education and enforcement can help prevent deaths and injuries in these populations. Tucson has long been a leader and innovator in bike and pedestrian safety and infrastructure, but widespread adoption of safety measures has been slowed by a lack of resources. The goal is to reduce fatalities to zero through improvements to data collection and analysis, infrastructure, laws, enforcement, and education.

The primary reason to participate in the challenge is to reduce preventable deaths on city streets. In addition to saving lives, best practices in bike and pedestrian safety also encourage more people to choose to bike or walk. As safety and other improvements lead more people to choose active means of transportation, there is a "safety in numbers" effect as visibility and awareness among drivers increases.

Adding sidewalks, bridging disconnects in bike routes, building more signalized pedestrian crossings and adding new, low-stress routes are some ways that gaps can

be closed to help provide a safe, comfortable, multimodal transportation network throughout the city. Improving laws, education and enforcement can encourage safer practices by bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists alike.

Active transportation improves the health of the community through increased physical activity and reduced air pollution. There are also economic benefits—people who walk and bike tend to shop at locally-owned businesses, keeping more money in the local economy, and businesses increasingly want to be located where there are a variety of transportation options available.

Using resources provided by USDOT and input from the action team, we will identify areas for improvement, learn from the experience of other communities, and take action to improve safety for all who use our streets.

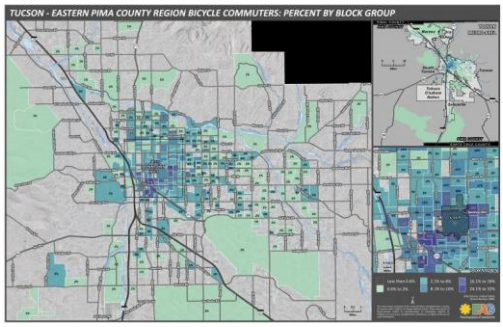
Part B: Assessment by category

1. **Complete Streets—Making sure policy and design support safe walking, biking and transit use**
    - Good practices:
        - Road projects require bike and pedestrian facilities
        - Over 100 signalized pedestrian crossings
        - Nearly ubiquitous bike lane coverage on arterial and collector network
        - Various policies and parts of city code support improvements to bike and pedestrian infrastructure

    - Possible improvements:
        - Adopt a Complete Streets policy (possibly as part of revising the Major Streets and Routes Plan) to standardize procedures and designs that have been implemented on a case-by-case basis and to increase eligibility for grant funding
        - Develop guidelines to ensure the Complete Streets strategies are implemented accordingly
        - Develop more “low-stress” bike infrastructure, such as bike boulevards and protected bike lanes
        - Implement a Vision Zero Campaign for Tucson
2. **Fix Barriers—Addressing deficits in the transportation network that limit the mobility of road users of any age or ability**
    - Good practices:
        - Road projects are reviewed by a multi-disciplinary team to ensure needs of all users
        - Major road projects receive input from a variety of stakeholders and require bike and ADA-compliant pedestrian facilities
        - Gaps in the pedestrian network on arterial and collector roads are documented
        - There is a comprehensive inventory of ADA-compliant transit stops

- Engaged advocacy groups are involved in the planning process
- Challenges:
  - Infrastructure improvements are usually only required as part of large road projects (typically reconstruction/widening)
  - Dedicated funding for pedestrian and bicycle facilities is limited
  - Lack of policies requiring improvements in circumstances other than large road projects means internal and external advocates must work closely to achieve mobility goals
- Possible improvements:
  - During maintenance, improve entire roadway rather than just "curb to curb"
  - Conduct a low-stress analysis of the bike network to identify gaps
  - Establish a dedicated, sustainable funding source for ADA/pedestrian improvements

3. **Gather Data—Improving the collection of safety and other data on bike/ped travel, and using that information to guide improvements to the transportation network**
   - Good practices:
     - Pima Association of Governments' (PAG) annual bike/ped count provides data for identifying trends in walking and bicycling
     - PAG does a good job studying pedestrian and bicycle crash data, although analysis has a regional focus
     - Several Road Safety Assessments (RSAs) have been conducted based on crash data

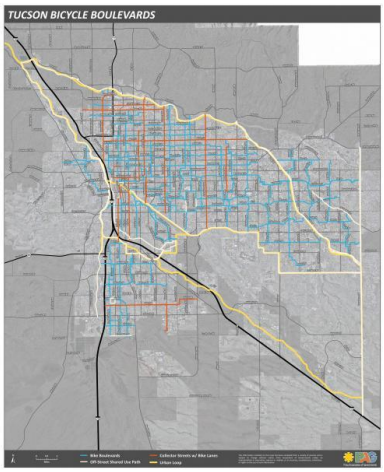


   - Challenges:
     - Tucson currently does limited crash data analysis
     - Bike/ped count data are inconsistent due to volunteer data collection and short sampling periods
   - Possible improvements:
     - Repair or add automated counters for more consistent data collection at key locations
     - Partner with the University of Arizona to pilot usage of traffic control cameras for bicycle counting
     - Align collection methods with national standards
     - Study needs and bike/ped network usage by transit users to identify potential improvements for these users
4. **Design Right—Going beyond minimum standards to make streets safe, comfortable and convenient for everybody**
   - Good practices:
     - City uses American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) design criteria and complies with Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)
     - National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street and Bikeway Design Guides have informed design decisions but are not officially adopted

- City is designing new construction to be compliant with draft PROWAG (Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines) standards for enhanced ADA accessibility
- Neighborhood residents are consulted for major projects and there is a process for public input on residential streets

- Possible improvements:
  - Officially adopt NACTO design guides and/or become a NACTO City
  - Systematically review speed limits on collector/arterial roads and reduce speed limits in areas of high pedestrian demand where roadway conditions allow
  - Adopt a bike network plan that would prioritize key corridors for regional bicycle travel and adopt an effective process for implementation

5. **Create Networks—Continuing to connect bike and ped facilities to create a high-quality citywide multimodal network**



- Good practices:
  - Road diets and lane diets have been implemented as part of roadway resurfacing to add bike lanes inexpensively
  - City responds to requests for sidewalk and other maintenance, but unreported issues can slip under the radar
  - Full ADA-compliance inventory of Tucson sidewalks is currently underway
  - Network of HAWKS and other bike/ped crossing treatments continues to grow
  - Bike boulevard master plan underway; multiple bike boulevards completed or coming soon
  - New separated and protected bike lanes have been built; more planned
- Possible improvements:
  - Develop city-specific bicycle and pedestrian master plans
  - Develop standards to streamline road and lane diet processes
  - Prioritize bike and pedestrian projects as part of standard roadway maintenance
  - Accelerate ADA retrofits of non-accessible transit stops (approx. 1,000 are not accessible)

6. **Improve Laws—Reviewing local and state laws to identify common sense changes to make for a better transportation experience for everyone**
   - Good practices:
     - Tucson's laws are mostly friendly to pedestrians and bicycles
   - Challenges:
     - Potential improvements to state law may be politically difficult
   - Possible improvements:
     - Work with the Bicycle Advisory Committee and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to identify potential updates and improvements to local and state laws
     - Encourage Mayor/Council to change or adopt local ordinances to improve bicycle/pedestrian safety (i.e. modify the 'jaywalking' code)
     - Encourage PAG to support vulnerable user legislation, or otherwise strengthen penalties for careless driving
7. **Educate and Enforce—Working to ensure that all road users understand the law and know how to be safe when walking, biking, or driving**

- Good practices:
  - Printed materials—ped safety brochure, bike/ped program brochure, Pima County share the road guide, Bicycle and Pedestrian Program newsletter
  - PSAs—PAG Walk Safe Drive Safe campaign is in its early stages and will target all users
  - Selected enforcement operations targeted at drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians
  - Bike and ped diversion classes and bike safety classes available
  - Crash data analysis by PAG helps inform targeted enforcement for TPD and UAPD
- Challenges:
  - Lack of resources at TPD to do extensive officer training or enforcement operations
- Possible improvements:
  - Use PAG pedestrian plan crash analysis to target high-risk behaviors, locations, and times
  - Develop 6-minute trainings for officers; partner with BAC or PAC on materials
  - Emphasize relative risk of different behaviors in user and officer education (e.g. wrong-way sidewalk riding vs. running stop signs)
  - Host a comprehensive officer training led by former officers who specialize in these trainings
  - Implement targeted messages against texting and driving